

# Development or free trade?

In 1989, American statesman Lyndon LaRouche put forward a plan for the infrastructural upgrading of the European continent—centered on a “Productive Triangle” inscribed from Paris, Berlin, and Vienna—as the basis for the urgently required development of eastern Europe and Russia. In 1992, *EIR* published an extension of this program—“Eurasian Alliance for Infrastructure: Key to World Peace”—which proposed a “new Silk Route” from Europe to Asia (see **Map 16**, overleaf). The plan proposed the revival of the ancient routes of land travel which linked east and west, the route which linked the great civilizations of the Sung dynasty of China with the flourishing Islamic civilization of West Asia, and into Europe.

The Mongol invasion of Central Asia in the thirteenth century destroyed these civilizations and leveled the great cities of Central Asia. Soviet colonialism also left the economies of the republics of Central Asia at such a degraded level, that Central Asian infant mortality rates were as high as those of sub-Saharan Africa.

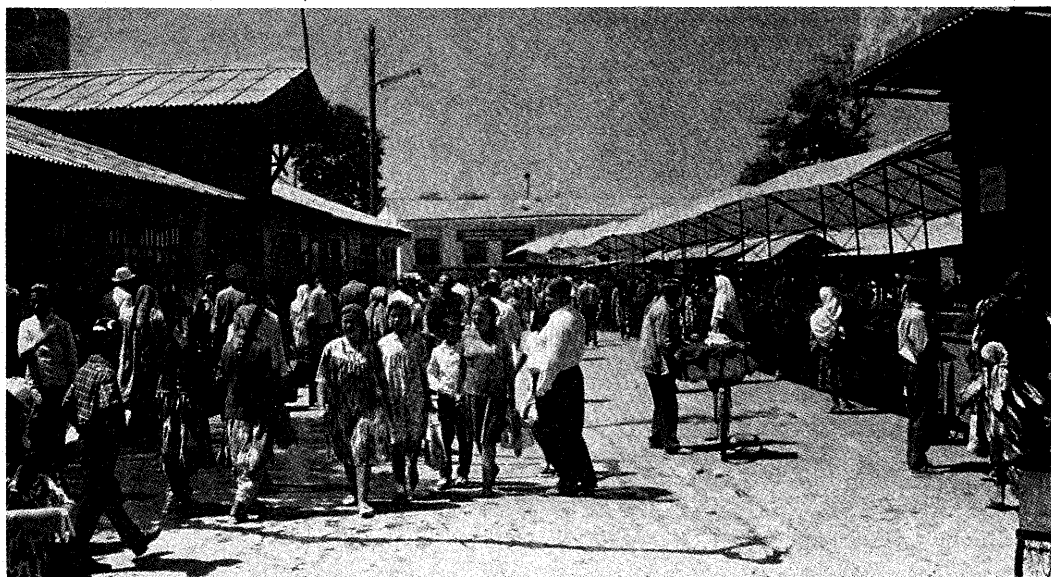
The construction of a new Silk Route today would link the vast regions of the Eurasian land mass, currently cut off by major physical barriers and by war zones. The rail lines would also function as the driving force for development across the entire continent.

This is because, as the history of the development of the United States proved, rail lines not only function as the circu-

latory system for a national and global economy, but are the backbone for internal development. The rail lines proposed are not simple transport grids, but are designed as *infrastructure corridors*—the lines along which population and energy density reach levels critical enough to power industrialization. Arrayed on either side of the rail line are nuclear-powered urban-industrial complexes—nuplexes—surrounded by areas of intensive agriculture. High-input, intensive agriculture takes advantage of the nuclear technology process for irrigation and fertilizer production.

The land area of a 50-kilometer corridor on each side of the lines proposed for the Silk Route Lines A, B, and C, already encompasses between 800 and 900 million people—about 25% of the entire population of Eurasia and more than 50% of its industrial workforce. Given that Eurasia comprises more than three-fifths of the world's population, the Silk Route concept is the physical basis for reconstruction of the current dilapidated world economy.

But London has had other ideas. The Central Asian republics, as with Russia itself and the eastern European nations, are being treated to the same array of policies as the British colonialists imposed on India in the eighteenth century: forced deindustrialization, extraction of natural resources, and the incorporation into a global enterprise of drug cultivation and trafficking—the very policies for which Adam Smith was the hired apologist.



*An open-air market in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, as it appeared during the Soviet era about 20 years ago. This capital, which once enjoyed a flourishing Islamic civilization and is now rapidly becoming a major opium-growing center, lies on the northern branch of Line B of the proposed Eurasian rail grid, right in the middle of the “new Silk Route” from Europe to Asia.*

